

***NAESV Statement regarding the inclusion of prostitution in the crimes addressed by the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA), as proposed in H.R. 3887, the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2007.***

## **Background:**

Passed in 2000, the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (division A of Public Law 106-386) was groundbreaking policy that created law enforcement tools, data tracking and an initial victim service infrastructure to assist victims of sex and labor trafficking<sup>1</sup>.

## **Statement of Position:**

Recognizing the devastating consequences of labor and sex trafficking, **NAESV supports the original intent of the TVPA to focus existing resources on what many have appropriately termed ‘modern day slavery’**. In particular, NAESV supports the historical approach of the TVPA to focus the resources of the act on those victims who forcibly relocated for the purposes of providing labor or sex through “force, fraud, or coercion”.

**As many advocacy and human rights organizations who currently work on trafficking issues will attest, victims of trafficking often present a complex array of service needs which are often complicated by the need to address issues of residency, immigration and legal status.** Federally, the TVPA is one of the only specific policy vehicles available in the United States to provide services, enforcement and legal relief for victims who are made vulnerable by this unique combination of circumstances.

**The harmful impacts of crimes such as prostitution and the sexual exploitation of children on both those that experience them and the communities in which they thrive deserve the full attention of policy makers and advocates.** NAESV would encourage both state and federal policy makers to identify specific strategies and resources that would address the particular and unique circumstances of these crimes.

**NAESV is in agreement with many of our human rights, immigrant rights, law enforcement and advocate colleagues<sup>2</sup> who believe that HR 3887 seriously undermines the focus, enforceability and viability of the TVPA by:**

- **Creating confusing, and duplicative definitions of sex trafficking** which will distort trafficking incidence data, dramatically increase law enforcement response burdens and dilute the meager existing resources dedicated to serving victims of trafficking.
- **Eliminating the crime of sex trafficking from existing, profoundly necessary, 13th amendment protections** which mandate the elimination of slavery in all of its forms and practices.

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<sup>1</sup> for a summary of the Act please see [www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking/about/TVPA\\_2000.pdf](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking/about/TVPA_2000.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> See letter dated 1/23/2008 and talking points from CAST

- **Straining existing Victim of Crime Act funds by adding additional crimes to its scope without the identification of any additional resource.** These funds, which are slated for dramatic reductions in the President Bush's 2008 proposed budget simply can not underwrite additional services without significant revenue enhancements.
- **Diluting the focus of the Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section** of the US Department of Justice by expanding the sections scope to include crimes against adults.

NAESV urges the Senate and the President to **reject** the changes proposed in H.R. 3887.